

Sketch

Volume 38, Number 3

1973

Article 23

The Diner

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The Diner

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Fisheries & Wildlife Biology, Soph.

She always sits in that corner there. It's kinda dark in that part of the dining hall, and the light falls on her face in, well, a kind of pretty way. She eats slowly. Always delicately unfolds her paper napkin, running her fingers over the edges, and smooths it slowly, roundly, across the tops of her thighs. Then she takes a drink. She lifts her glass high so that her chin's up, and the light falls on the smoothness of her neck, and all the time she's kind of peering over the glass, scanning the room. That's when I catch her eyes. She's got dark eyes, and they rove the room over that poised glass, and I get nervous and fight to keep my head up to wait for her eyes. They just seem to latch on to mine, and without wanting to, I almost jump up from the table where I and my friends are sitting and go over to her.

But they dive bomb, they always dive bomb, straight back into her plate. She sits rigid then, her arms tight against her sides, her hands ending in her lap. Then she picks up her fork. The light always kinda glints off it, and she stabs at her jello, twisting her fork in it. Then she stops, just watching the pieces vibrate on her plate. And her cheeks grow hard and concave, and her mouth twists as if she had eaten something foul. And she's not pretty anymore. And I realize she's smiling, sitting there smiling into her plate. And it's the most terrible thing I've ever seen.